

Web Announcement 5/24/06  
OLQ RELEASES VAPOR INTRUSION PILOT PROGRAM

### Introduction

It is possible for vapor to migrate from volatile contamination in the groundwater or the soil and intrude into residences and other structures. This process has become known as “vapor intrusion.” Vapor intrusion is a complex and sometimes serious environmental problem. At this time, our understanding of the science that can predict vapor migration into a structure is limited and there is no official written guidance available that can be reliably used across a wide range of sites. Until such guidance is available, some level of interim approach is needed. The Office of Land Quality (OLQ) is proposing to use a preliminary recommended approach to site investigation that can support Non Rule Policy development in the near future.

The recommended interim approach is termed the Vapor Intrusion Pilot Program. The Pilot Program is not required guidance and no one is under any obligation to use it. It is instead, a flexible process, designed to aid project managers and others in site investigation and data collection. While a responsible party or site investigator does not have to follow the pilot program, they must address the vapor pathway and insure that vapor is not migrating into residences or other occupied structures above health protective levels.

### Approach and Applicability

The Pilot Program has screening levels, for groundwater contamination, soil gas, and gas beneath the concrete slabs or basements of structures. Failing screening levels prompts further investigation through a sequential approach that may culminate with indoor air measurements. An investigation can screen out at any of the screening level stages. While corrective action can be taken at step in the sequence, it is only indoor air measurements that OLQ uses to recommend corrective action.

A significant purpose of the Pilot is to collect empirical data on screening levels. Regardless of the approach taken, OLQ would like to collect vapor data and use it to provide empirical support so that screening levels can be changed or verified.

It is not OLQ’s intention to revisit closed or remediated sites in order to investigate the possibility of vapor intrusion. It is not OLQ’s intention to require others to revisit closed or remediated sites. However, if someone presents information relative to a known or well-evidenced health threat from vapor intrusion at any site, OLQ has no option except to investigate.

If the responsible parties choose not to participate in the Pilot Program there is considerable guidance available that discusses options and approaches to vapor intrusion site investigation. These references are available and given in the text of the Pilot Program. OLQ has tried to utilize all available information to date in the development of

this Pilot. OLQ does not consider the Pilot Program to be required guidance and is not seeking official comment. However, all input is welcomed and can be given to any OLQ site manager. OLQ encourages your participation and appreciates any assistance you may choose to provide.